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ABSTRACT

The relationships between masculinity and femininity as measured by the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), achievement conflicts (fear of success and fear of failure), and a variety of attitudes in men and women were examined in three survey studies. Contrary to Bem's suggestion that femininity in women serves to dampen independent and assertive behaviors, femininity was found to be largely independent of issues in the achievement domain. Instead, increased masculinity was found to correlate with decreased achievement conflicts in women. Other sex differences in the correlations between the BSRI and other scales were examined. The data, particularly on feminist attitudes, suggest that the BSRI masculinity and femininity scales measure different things in men and women, thereby substantially undermining the validity of the BSRI as a measure of androgyny. Alternate approaches to operationalizing androgyny were considered. (Author)

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Sex Roles, Feminism, and Achievement Conflicts

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Introduction

In traditional psychology, masculinity and femininity have been treated as opposite ends of a bipolar scale. Bem (1974) proposed that masculinity and femininity represent complimentary domains of traits and behaviors that could coexist within the same individual. She described the androgynous person as one who was both "masculine and feminine, both individual and expressive, both agentic and communal" (Bem, Martyna, and Watson, 1976, p. 1016). Bem devised a sixty item measure of sex-role identification, the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), to identify masculine sex-typed, feminine sex-typed, and androgynous persons. In a number of laboratory experiments conducted by Bem and her colleagues (Bem, 1975; Bem and Lenney, 1976; Bem, Martyna, and Watson, 1976), androgyns behaved adaptively in a wider variety of situations than sex-typed subjects did.

The current paper reports data from a set of studies that were conducted to investigate the implications of sex role identification for the way people live. The specific issues studied were relationships between sex role identification as measured by the BSRI and possible sex differences in the relationship between androgyny and achievement conflicts, as well as demographic items and questions designed to tap attitudes toward various occupations and lifestyle plans. Two scales developed by Sadd, Lennauer, Shaver, and Dunivant (1978) in a study of objective measurement of fear of success and fear of failure were used to measure achievement related conflicts. Fear of success (FOS) measures the individual's fear of the negative consequences of success, and fear of failure (FOF) is a measure of self-deprecation and insecurity. Both FOS and FOF are likely to affect performance in an achievement situation.

In a series of studies (Bem, 1975; Bem & Lenney, 1976; Bem, Martyna, & Watson, 1976) Bem and her colleagues traced the effects of androgyny on behavior. They found that feminine females were the least active and proposed that high femininity in females is related to high anxiety and poor social adjustment (Bem, 1975). Bem's discussion of the feminine female leads one to consider the relationship between femininity and fear of success as defined by Horner (1969).

According to Horner (1969) fear of success is "the fear that success in competitive situations will lead to negative consequences." Horner believed that FOS was the result of sex role socialization and therefore more likely to be present in females than in males. Arousal of this type of anxiety in achievement situations is likely to lead to performance decrements. Since both fear of success and femininity are inhibitors of performance, it is possible that the presence of fear of success is related to high femininity.

A series of correlational and experimental studies that investigated relationships among androgyny, achievement related conflicts (FOS and FOF), and feminism are reported in the present paper. In each of the studies androgyny was measured using the BSRI (Bem, 1974). The BSRI is a 60-item scale which contains a Masculinity Scale (20 items), a Femininity Scale (20 items) and 20 neutral items. For each item the individual indicates on a 7-point scale how well each of the personality characteristics describes him/herself. A number of different scores can be computed using the masculinity and femininity scales; these are described below. Fear of success and fear of failure were measured using shorter versions of the scales developed by Sadd et al. (1978). The FOS scale contains 21 items and the FOF scale contains 26 items; each item is answered on a 4-point agree-disagree scale (Sadd, 1977). While the objective measure of fear of success is not the

same as Horner's projective test, it was used for ease of administration and because the items on it reflect fear of the negative consequences of success. [For further discussion of these issues see Sadd (1977) and Sadd et al. (1978).] The items on the FOF measure reflect a general anxiety that is manifested as self-deprecation and insecurity. It is characterized by failure to live up to one's own standards, self-consciousness, unassertiveness, and behavioral manifestations of insecurity. In some of the studies presented here a scale of feminist attitudes was used; the FEM Scale (Smith, Ferree, and Miller, 1975) which contains 20 items, each of which is answered on a 7-point scale.

A number of hypotheses were tested using the personality and attitudinal measures described above. If, as Bem (1975) claims, femininity is related to high anxiety, high neuroticism, and low self-acceptance, then individuals who score high on the femininity scale should also be high in FOS and FOF. Bem (1975) also proposed that non-androgynous or "sex-typed" individuals are restricted in the range of behaviors available to them in various situations. That is, the masculine sex-typed person is constrained to act in ways appropriate to the female sex-role. In contrast, "the androgynous individual should be able to remain sensitive to the changing constraints of the situation and engage in whatever behavior seems most effective at the moment, regardless of its stereotype as appropriate for one sex or the other" (Bem, 1975, pp. 634-635). One of the studies in the present paper was an experiment conducted to test the hypothesis that sex-typed individuals would perform less well on a task labelled as sex-inappropriate than they would on tasks that were appropriate for their sex.

The correlational studies examined the relationship between feminism and androgyny. It was expected that feminism would be positively correlated with androgyny. Feminist ideology stresses that both traditionally male and traditionally female behaviors should be available to members of both genders; thus, androgynous persons should be more likely than those who are sex-typed to endorse feminist attitudes.

Method

Two survey studies were conducted as class projects in social psychology classes at New York University. The first study was conducted in the spring of 1977, and the second in the fall of 1977. Students in each class completed a questionnaire containing the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), the Smith, Ferree, and Miller (1975) scale of feminist attitudes (FEM scale), demographic data, and a small number of questions concerning marital and lifestyle plans. In addition, the spring survey included an extensive section on attitudes towards various sex typed and untyped occupations and measures of achievement conflict (Sadd et al., 1978). The occupation questions were not included in the fall survey, however, the achievement conflict measures, the Crowne-Marlowe (1964) Social Desirability Scale and a greatly expanded section of questions about life style were included. After the students had completed the instrument in class, they were asked to administer copies of the questionnaire to both their parents (if possible) and to their closest male friend and their closest female friend.

In the spring class, 106 students completed the questionnaire. They also returned data from 66 mothers (62.3%), 55 fathers (51.2%), 66 male friends (62.3%, and 65 female friends (61.3%). In the fall class, 76 students completed the questionnaire. They returned data from 31 mothers (40.1%), 24 fathers (31.2%), 33 male friends (43.4%), and 40 female friends (52.6%). (A possible explanation for the small return rate is that the questionnaire was much longer than the one used during the previous spring.) Since all samples were drawn from the same population, the data were combined for analysis in those instances in which the same question was asked in both studies.

The BSRI and the achievement conflict measures were also completed by 550 students enrolled in Introductory Psychology at New York University in the fall of 1977. These measures were included as part of a battery of instruments the students were required to complete for credit in the introductory course. In presenting the results, care is taken to indicate whether specific data are from the spring course, the fall course, the combined courses, or the introductory psychology class.

Results

Four scores based on Bem's measure of sex roles are discussed in these analyses. These are femininity and masculinity, the subject's mean score on the twenty feminine and masculine items of the BSRI respectively; and androgyny, which is the difference between a subject's score on the femininity and masculinity scales. A high negative score on the androgyny measure represents a masculine sex-type, a high positive score indicates a feminine sex type, and a low score (positive or negative) represents an androgynous individual. The fourth score is sex typing which is the absolute value of the androgyny score. These absolute values yield a scale that runs from androgynous to sex typed. These four continuous scores were used instead of Bem's t-ratio method (cf. Bem, 1977) in order to preserve as much of the specific variance in the measures as possible for correlational analyses. The t-ratio method, which categorizes people in a nominal scale, is only preferable when one is using the instrument to pre-select subjects for experimental groups.[2]

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[2] An alternative method of categorization which was used by Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp (1975) is the median split. This technique distinguishes four groups: masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated. Androgynous subjects are those who score above the median on both the masculinity and femininity scales; undifferentiated individuals score below the median on both scales. This method is used to categorize subjects for experiments, not in correlational studies. While the point may be raised that the continuous method fails to differentiate between androgyns and undifferentiated individuals, the range of scores in the present data are so restricted as to make such a classification highly unreliable.

Most of our predictions concerning sex roles and achievement conflicts were not supported. In the Spring, 1977 data, femininity was not related to either of the achievement conflict measures. On the masculinity scale, a different pattern emerged for males than for females. For females (N=61), masculinity was correlated negatively with fear of success ($r = -.329$, $p < .01$) and correlated very strongly negatively ($r = -.620$; $p < .001$) with fear of failure. These relationships were also reflected in significant correlations between the androgyny difference scores and the achievement conflict measures. For a smaller sample of males (N = 28), the relationships between masculinity and achievement conflicts were also negative, but non-significant.

The pattern for females was replicated in the much larger sample from the introductory psychology test battery. Among 282 female students femininity was virtually orthogonal to the achievement measures ($r_{FOS} = -.086$; $r_{FOF} = -.072$); masculinity was negatively correlated with FOS ($r = -.308$, $p < .001$) and FOF ($r = -.472$, $p < .001$). Among males (N = 219), several relationships were significant in the battery data. Femininity was correlated very weakly with low FOS ($r = -.135$, $p < .05$). Masculinity was also correlated with lessened fear of success ($r = -.305$, $p < .001$) and with lowered fear of failure ($r = -.234$, $p < .001$) though the latter correlation was not as strong as it was for females.

The same pattern that appeared in the spring data emerged among students and their friends in the full data. (Friends were included in the analyses because they were members of the same age cohort as the students.) Among sixty males, there were no significant relationships between sex roles (the four scores derived from the BSRI) and achievement conflicts. For the 89 females in the sample, the relationships were weaker than in previous data, but FOF was correlated with androgyny ($r = .247$, $p < .05$) as in other samples.

Overall, it appears that contrary to expectations, femininity is not related to achievement conflicts in women. It also contributes little to explaining the variance in achievement conflicts in men. For women, androgyny is consistently related to fear of failure, with increases in masculinity appearing to account for decreasing FOF. The relationship with masculinity is only weakly present for men. There is also some evidence that increasing masculinity is related to decreasing FOS for women; the evidence on this is less clear for men.

It is not sufficient to look only at the impact of sex roles on achievement conflicts in survey data. Zeitz (1978) (See Appendix I) collected data on behavioral correlates of androgyny in a study designed to test the effects of sex, task appropriateness and success or failure feedback on subjects' actual performance on an achievement-related task and on causal attributions for performance. In this study male and female subjects were led to believe that they were performing a sex appropriate or sex inappropriate task, and after performing the task they were given success or failure feedback. It was predicted that task appropriateness rather than gender was the crucial variable producing performance and attributional effects that are commonly attributed to fear of success. Specifically, it was predicted that both males and females would perceive their performance as worse on sex-inappropriate tasks, and would show performance decrements in such situations.

The BSRI and the FOS and FOF measures, collected earlier in the semester (in the introductory psychology test battery), were used as covariates in the study. It was hypothesized that the effects predicted above would be accentuated for feminine women and masculine men, while androgynous individuals would be less susceptible to the manipulation of gender appropriateness of the task. The predictions were not supported. Furthermore, analysis

of the covariate data showed no effects of the task appropriateness manipulation even for sex-role stereotyped subjects, who theoretically would be more susceptible than the sample as a whole.

The correlational data reported above contain an important sex difference; masculinity is correlated with fear of success and fear of failure for women but not for men. This difference raises an important question about Bem's method for assessing sex roles: to what degree are masculinity and femininity independent of gender? It is central to the construct validity of Bem's androgyny measure that sex roles be independent of both biological gender and of socialization experiences that would prevent a sex role from becoming part of any person's role repertoire. In Bem's framework androgynous men and women should have the same sex role, just as a masculine woman should share the role of a masculine man, or a feminine man the role of a feminine woman. On the other hand, if the sex roles we measure mean different things to men and women then we have not yet measured a construct that freer sex roles from subject sex as Bem sought to do.

The construct validity of Bem's masculinity and femininity scales and of the androgyny difference score computed from the two scales was explored by examining the relationships of the scales with a large number of survey questions concerning lifestyle that were included in the spring and fall studies. Not surprisingly (in the data of the two classes combined) males have higher masculinity scores than females ($\bar{X}_{male} = 5.032$, $\bar{X}_{female} = 4.614$; $t(180) = 3.580$, $p < .001$) and females have higher femininity scores than males ($\bar{X}_{females} = 5.100$, $\bar{X}_{males} = 4.632$; $t(180) = -5.881$, $p < .001$). It follows that the mean androgyny difference scores for males are just slightly to the masculine side

of the mean (of the difference score), females' scores just slightly to the feminine side and the difference between the two is significant ($\bar{X}_{female}$ = .487, $\bar{X}_{male}$ = -.400; t(180) = -6.401, $p < .001$). It should be noted that these are means on a scale with a range of twelve points and that the standard deviation of all scores is .972. Thus, it is clear that these students' mean scores cluster around the midpoint of the androgyny scale.

Very few of the life-style variables were related to sex roles. Among the items that showed no effect were: age; ethnicity; major; career plans; age at which subject first dated; how often subjects were involved with lovers, usual behavior after breaking up; number of children wanted; perceived likelihood of divorce; attitudes towards living together; interest in homosexuality; sexual experience; sex of close friends; whether the subject lives with his/her parents; which parent dominates decision making; amount of conflict with parents; which parent the subject is more likely to conflict with; and political ideology.

In several instances in which there were effects for sex role measures, the effects were different for males and females, as they were in the relationships between sex role and achievement conflict measures. This is particularly striking for the relationship between androgyny scores and feminist attitudes as measured on the FEM Scale. It was predicted that feminists would be more androgynous, since androgynous sex roles can be considered a part of feminist ideology. This expectation would lead one to predict high scores on both masculinity and femininity (on the Bem Scale) for feminists since both scales measure adaptive behaviors and both contribute to androgyny. Indeed, for all students in the combined data (N = 181) absolute value sex typing scores were correlated with feminism in the predicted direction, albeit weakly (r = -.162, $p < .05$). Feminism was not related to either femininity or masculinity.

However, when the data were analyzed separately for males and females a very different picture emerged. For females (N = 121), feminism was related to increasing masculinity ($r = .196$, $p < .05$), decreasing femininity ($r = -.194$, $p < .05$) and hence to increasingly masculine difference scores ($r = -.279$, $p < .01$). For males (N = 60) all of the relationships were exactly opposite to those found for females. Feminism is correlated with being increasingly feminine on the difference scores ($r = .391$, $p < .01$), and with decreasing masculinity ($r = -.391$, $p < .01$)[3] and with increasing femininity though not significantly ($r = .145$, n.s.). Thus for both genders, "reversal" of sex roles is related to feminism.

Some of the same relationships hold for the parents of student subjects. In the combined data for mothers (N = 90), increasing masculinity is a correlate of feminism ($r = .349$, $p < .001$) and feminism correlates with increasingly masculine difference scores ($r = -.363$, $p < .001$). For fathers (N = 75)there are no significant relationships between sex roles and feminism, although feminism tends to correlate with increased masculinity ($r = .163$, n.s.). For both fathers and mothers, masculinity is correlated with education (females $r = .310$, $p < .01$; males $r = .324$, $p < .01$). (Among students and friends there is not enough variance in education to test for such a relationship.)

In the spring data we asked students and friends whether their primary financial support came from themselves or from their parents. A two-way analysis of variance was computed with sex of subject and primary source of support as the independent variables and sex-typing (the absolute value of the difference score) as the dependent variable. The main effects were not significant; however there was a significant ($F (1,140) = 9.684$, $p = .003$) such

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[3] It is surprising that two correlations reported consecutively in a paper should be identical to three digits, but rest assured that these are two independent Pearson r's and not one typographical error. Whether this is a basis for placing a bet on the numbers is left to the individual reader's discretion.

that self-supporting males were more sex typed than family supported females. Thus independent men were more likely to be sex typed (which in males largely means being masculine), while independent women were likely to be androgynous.

In males, masculinity was not related to achievement conflicts but it did predict certain aspects of achievement. High masculinity correlated with how much money the subject reported he would like to be earning ten years after graduation ($r = .421$, $p < .001$) and how much he expected to earn at that time ($r = .430$, $p < .001$). These relationships did not hold for females. For females, masculinity was related to willingness to let their career take precedence over their marriage ($r = -.291$, $p < .01$) a relationship not found in males despite criticism of the traditional male role that men have tended to ignore their family and emotional lives while in pursuit of career success. Masculinity in males was correlated with the number of love affairs the subject claimed to have had ($r = .313$, $p < .05$); this relationship did not hold for females. Claims of sexual confidence were related to masculinity (males, $r = .324$, $p < .05$; females, $r = .410$, $p < .001$) and sex typing (males, $r = .257$ $p < .05$; females $r = .269$, $p < .05$) for both sexes.

Discussion

As is often the case in research, we seem to generate more questions than we resolve. Thus the review of our findings will lead eventually to a series of questions and suggestions for further research.

Androgyny and Achievement Conflicts

A major trend in achievement conflict research in the past few years has been to demonstrate that Horner found fear of success only in women subjects because of the limits of the methods she used (Shaver, 1976). Research has shown that conflicts over achievement in general and about success in cross sex-typed situations exist in both men and women. As discussed above, Horner's work suggests that the feminine sex role should be related to intensified achievement conflicts, at least in women; and Bem, Martyna, and Watson (1976) have argued that femininity encourages passivity in response to experimental tasks. One might then expect femininity to be related to fear of success. However, our survey research does not support this interpretation of the impact of femininity. Femininity as measured on the BSRI was not correlated with the intensity of achievement conflicts. On the other hand, masculinity was related to lessened achievement conflicts, especially lessened fear of failure for women but not as strongly for men. This suggests that increasing masculinity is related to an increasing ability for women to act in achievement situations.

On the other hand, the results of Baila Zeitz' experimental research indicate that sex role orientations do not affect behavior in a sex-typed achievement situation. However, this finding must be treated with the caution appropriate to any null result. A different manipulation or a sample drawn from a different population may well demonstrate a relationship between sex role and achievement strivings. All we report is our inability to obtain such a result. We can also suggest that other researchers attend closely to the dimension of masculinity and be attuned to the possibility of sex differences in subject behavior.

Implications for Androgyny as Measured by the BSRI

The sex differences we found in the relationships between the BSRI and other variables raise some important questions about the construct validity of Bem's sex role measure. It is crucial to the androgyny construct that sex role be related to other variables independently of gender. It would be most troubling if being highly masculine or highly feminine meant different things to a man or a woman, especially since androgyny, which certainly should not be gender related, is defined as a combination of the two. In Bem's measure, masculinity is equated with task orientation and femininity with socio-emotional orientation, in line with Parsons and Bales (1955) analysis of social and familial roles. Just as Borgatta, Couch and Bales (1954) have suggested that the two role orientations can be combined occasionally in a "great man," Bem now suggests a merging of the two can produce androgyny. Bem's androgyny is both masculine and feminine. If Bem had operationalized masculinity and femininity to include their more negative aspects, then masculinity in a traditionally sex typed "corporate" or "macho" man would differ from the masculinity that would emerge in an androgynous woman. But Bem's operational definition of masculinity equates masculinity in sex typed masculine men with masculinity in androgynous people or masculine women, all independent of gender. If sex differences are found, then Bem has not operationalized sex roles independently of gender and her measure cannot be used as a guide to identifying androgynous people whose behavior is free from gender constraints.

Our results suggest that masculinity in males is linked to a variety of forms of traditionalism: striving for a high income, for numerous lovers (sexual conquests), and for financial independence, as well as the adoption of anti-feminist attitudes. For women, masculinity is related to anti-traditional

positions: the holding of pro-feminist attitudes; a lessened commitment to marriage in the face of career demands; and a lessened reported sense of conflicts over achievement. An opposite claim might be made for femininity on the basis of its correlations with feminism -- that femininity indicates traditionalism in females and anti-traditionalism in males, but since femininity correlated with little else save feminism, this argument cannot be buttressed with additional data.

This analysis poses three broad questions about Bem's scale. First, is Bem's scale a satisfactory measure of androgyny if there are sex differences in the implications of its scales? The construct validity of Bem's measure and the political orientation it supports rests on the belief that sex roles can exist independently of gender. We must evaluate the sex differences in Bem's measure to see if we are measuring gender-free roles. If we are not, we should either seek a gender free measure or question our ability to free role from gender.

Second, we must question the impact of sex roles as measured by the BSRI on day-to-day behavior. Most of the lifestyle variables we measured were not related to BSRI scores. While time does not permit us to report the data here, many more lifestyle variables were related to feminist attitudes and to subject sex than were related to measured sex roles. Why are the effects of sex roles fairly limited? One possibility is that sex role has the limits of most personality trait measures. The use of trait measures to predict behavior has been widely debated in the past ten years (Mischel, 1977; Hogan, 1977). It has been argued that single trait measures taken by themselves cannot account for much variance in single behaviors. Regardless of the theoretical significance of sex role alteration, such changes in individuals may not bring about changes in day-to-day behavior in the absence of changes in the social system, social expectations and changes in many members of groups. Change in single individuals is unlikely to result in social change unless environmental change is commensurate with changes in individuals (cf. Miller, 1976).

Aside from this question of whether changes in individuals create social change, there may be simple statistical reasons why BSRI scores have so few correlates. The ranges of scores on Bem's masculinity and femininity measures are extremely restricted and skewed. Though the means for masculinity in our data do not appear to differ appreciably from the means Bem (1974) reported from either Stanford or Foothills Junior College, the androgyny difference scores are even closer to the androgynous midpoint than Bem's. This restriction of range limits the BSRI variance available to correlate with other measures. In addition, the skew of masculinity and femininity scores toward the high end of each scale increases the likelihood of measurement error in each observation since extreme scores generally contain more error. While androgyny scores are clustered around the scale midpoint, they combine the measurement error from each of two independent skewed scores. By only using positive trait adjectives and a seven point scale worded so that subjects would avoid its lower half when making self ratings on positive traits, Bem has inflated the measurement error in her instrument. This restriction on range could be suggested to be a function of collecting data from sophisticated college students. Perhaps a more heterogeneous population would yield more subjects with low scores on one of the sex role measures. However, our data from students' parents belie this contention. The mean androgyny scores for fathers were virtually identical to those for male students, as were mother's scores and those of female students, even though these adults come from a wide range of economic classes and educational attainment. This absence of generational differences on the BSRI causes one to wonder whether the current generation is revolutionizing sex roles, as is widely touted . It is possible that older adults are changing their sex roles too. It is also possible that adolescence, which has been a period of extreme sex role polarization that declined in adulthood (Erikson, 1963), is becoming less of a sex role battleground. These are issues

for further research. One cannot argue that generational or cohort effects have totally disappeared from our sample. Students were substantially more feminist than parents; female students were more feminist than male students; who are in turn more feminist than others; who in turn are more feminist than fathers. Again, the importance of sex roles as operationalized by the BSRI must be evaluated further.

A final issue about the BSRI is whether masculinity and femininity can be argued to yield androgyny by an additive process? While Bem sought to transcend the traditional personality psychology view of masculinity and femininity as polar opposites, she adopted the equally familiar position of structural functional sociology that treats masculinity and femininity as orthogonal constructs both of which make necessary contributions to the functioning of any society or small group. In this view, the family is a small group in which the division of specialized task and socio-emotional functions between men and women has been praised by the structural-functionalists (Parsons, Bales, Olds, Zelditch and Slater, 1955). Bem's sociology may be structural-functional, but one doubts that her politics are. She seeks to combine both roles in a single person rather than in a group. Yet she retains structural-functional assumptions: that both characteristics contribute to the integration and functioning of the system; that neither has inherently negative qualities to be criticized; that the only flaw of each is that it lacks the qualities of the other; and that neither will be altered by their combination. A dialectical approach (Riegel, 1976) in which the synthesis of masculinity and femininity leads to the modification of each may prove more intellectually satisfying. In such a view, the androgyn may not be a catalog of currently available traits, but a new synthesis requiring definition on its own terms.

We beg the panel's indulgence for our letting this discussion wander far afield from achievement conflicts. However, our ability to relate sex roles to achievement conflicts rests on our ability to understand and operationalize both sex roles and conflicts. To the extent that the measurement of sex roles requires further attention, their relations to other variables must at times be deferred.

APPENDIX I

Fifty-five male and sixty-five female New York University undergraduates participated in the experiment in partial fulfillment of requirements for the introductory psychology course. Subjects were run in blocks of five to eight of one sex. They were seated in individual cubicles so that they all could see the experimenter but so that they could not see each other. Experimenter 1 (always the same male) introduced the task as a "culture-free" intelligence test, administered under the pressure of time, at which either males or females purportedly did better. Experimenter 2 (always the same female), blind to the appropriateness of task manipulation, then entered and explained the percentile scoring procedure. Success/failure feedback was manipulated through false percentile scores posted on the blackboard; although a string of scores was presented, each subject was actually preassigned to either "C" -- success condition with highest percentile score in string, or to "D" -- failure condition with lowest scores. Experimenter 2 then administered part 1 of the Group Embedded Figures Test (Witkin, 1950) which was immediately "scored" by Experimenter 1: subjects filled out questionnaires on how they thought they performed while waiting. The bogus percentile scores for part 1 were posted, while experimenter 2 repeated the meaning of percentile scores to ensure that success and failure conditions were salient. Students looked at their "scores" and then completed attribution questionnaires. They then completed part 2 of the EFT, and the sequence of questionnaire-feedback-questionnaire was repeated. Once materials were collected, subjects were thoroughly debriefed as to the nature and purpose of the study.

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